



SACHI A. HAMAI
EXECUTIVE OFFICER

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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July 06, 2010

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

ADOPTED

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

8

July 6, 2010

Sachi A. Hamai
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EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Dear Supervisors:

RECOMMENDATION REGARDING ALLOCATION OF REWARD FUNDS RELATING TO SEMAJ SPENCER (ALL DISTRICTS) (3 VOTES)

SUBJECT

Board approval is being requested for the distribution of reward funds in the amount of \$10,000 to be paid from the Board's discretionary funds.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOUR BOARD:

Approve the recommendation of the Reward Committee to distribute reward funds in the amount of \$1,000 to Claimant No. 1, and \$9,000 to Claimant No. 2, totaling \$10,000, to be paid from the Board's discretionary funds, to the two individuals who provided information to law enforcement that led to the apprehension and conviction of Andre Thompson who was responsible for the hit and run accident that killed Semaj Spencer.

PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION

On Sunday, August 2, 2009, shortly after 1:00 a.m., Semaj Spencer, a fourteen year old boy, was struck and killed by a hit-and-run driver on Imperial Highway just east of Crenshaw Boulevard in the city of Inglewood. Witnesses stated Semaj Spencer was knocked out of his shoes and dragged approximately 50 feet by the vehicle.

Subsequently, on August 4, 2009, your Board approved a motion by Supervisor Ridley-Thomas to offer a \$10,000 reward for any information leading to the apprehension and/or conviction of the person or persons responsible for the death of Semaj Spencer.

During their investigation, law enforcement officials were provided with information from a witness to

the accident who stated a red compact car traveling at a high rate of speed hit the victim. On December 31, 2009, this witness (Claimant No. 1) filed a claim for the reward.

In response to an evening news story regarding this incident which provided a description of the vehicle suspected in the accident, a second informant notified law enforcement that a vehicle matching the description of the vehicle suspected in the accident was parked in a parking stall on the 4800 block of West 118th Street in Los Angeles. This informant (Claimant No. 2) filed a claim for the reward with the Executive Office on October 15, 2009.

As a result of this information, on August 4, 2009, law enforcement personnel arrested and charged Andre Thompson with multiple violations, including the following:

- Vehicle Code 20001 – Felony Hit and Run
- Vehicle Code 192(c)2 – Misdemeanor Manslaughter

On May 13, 2010, Andre Thompson was convicted of violating California Vehicle Code Section 20001(a), which requires the driver of a vehicle involved in an accident resulting in injury to a person, other than himself or herself, or in the death of a person, shall immediately stop the vehicle at the scene of the accident and fulfill the requirements of California Vehicle Code Sections 20003 and 20004. Mr. Thompson was sentenced to 90 days evaluation in state prison. After the 90 day evaluation period, the judge will review the evaluation and determine if Mr. Thompson should serve the remainder of time in prison, up to three years, or receive probation.

Implementation of Strategic Plan Goals

Approval of the above recommendation supports the County Strategic Goal of Service Excellence. Publication in local newspapers and posting of reward notices on the County website may encourage persons to provide information to law enforcement which could lead to the apprehension and/or conviction of the individuals who commit crimes, thereby improving the quality of life to residents of Los Angeles County.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING

The Board of Supervisors established a \$10,000 reward fund. Pursuant to provisions in the County Code, the reward is to be paid from the Board of Supervisors' discretionary funds in equal shares of \$2,000 from each Supervisor's budget.

FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

In 1993, the Board of Supervisors adopted an amendment to the County Code establishing procedures for offering cash rewards for information leading to the apprehension and/or conviction of persons guilty of criminal acts. Your Board, from time to time has offered such rewards to encourage citizens to come forward and assist law enforcement with their investigations.

The action recommended is in compliance with the County Code, Title 4 – Revenue and Finance relating to rewards; and specifically Section 4.50.010B which states, "conviction of the person or persons responsible for the crime shall be required for payment of a reward unless the Board of Supervisors makes a finding of impossibility of conviction due to the death or incapacity of such person or persons."

The Honorable Board of Supervisors

7/6/2010

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The Notice of Reward Offered was posted on the Board of Supervisors' website and published in the Torrance Daily Breeze newspaper. In addition, copies were provided to the Inglewood Police Department.

IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES (OR PROJECTS)

Approval of this recommendation does not impact other current County services or projects.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Sachi A. Hamai".

SACHI A. HAMAI

Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors

SAH:da

c: Sheriff
Chief Executive Officer
County Counsel